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SUBJECT: UNDER SECRETARY BURNS'S MEETING WITH JAPANESE

DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER SASAE, JANUARY 28, 2008

Classified By: Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs

[1](#)R. Nicholas Burns, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: U/S Burns met for two hours on January 29 with his new Japanese counterpart, Deputy Foreign Minister Kenichiro Sasae, to discuss G8, UNSC reform, Iraq, Iran, Russia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, and Burma. Sasae described Japan's priorities for the G8, which include climate change/energy security, development in Africa and more "traditional issues" such as non-proliferation, counterterrorism and peace building. U/S Burns assured Sasae that the U.S. continued to support Japan for a permanent UN Security Council seat while emphasizing the importance of UN reform. U/S Burns briefed on the situation in Iraq; Sasae stressed Japan continued to support U.S. efforts there. U/S Burns asked for Japan's political support in New York for a third UN Security Council resolution on Iran and pressed Sasae for GOJ sanctions in line with those the EU is expected to implement. Sasae and U/S Burns agreed on the increasingly

intertwined importance of Afghanistan and Pakistan. U/S Burns briefed on U.S. policy toward India; Sasae described growing Japanese government and business interests there. Sasae described Japan's interest in supporting Gambari's Burma mission and said that Japan would like to address Burma through the G8; he also said he wanted to visit Burma himself, which U/S Burns supported. End Summary.

Japan's G8 Priorities

12. (C) Japanese Deputy Foreign Minister Kenichiro Sasae told U/S Burns January 29 that Japan's priorities for the G8 would include: climate change; development in Africa; and more "traditional issues" such as non-proliferation, counterterrorism and peace building. Japan planned that the Leaders' Statement would address all of these. Sasae said European counterparts had proposed institutionalizing the G8 plus 5 during his just-concluded consultations. Sasae noted that, in accordance with the G8's agreement in Heiligendamm to engage in continuous dialogue with the five largest emerging economies (China, India, Mexico, Brazil and South Africa), Japan would agree to such a dialogue, but not an institutionalization of this outreach. Japan also did not want to enlarge the G8; G8 enlargement should also not be linked to UNSC reform. Sasae also said that in addition to the plus 5, Japan would invite three Asian countries (Indonesia, Australia and the Republic of Korea) to attend,

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given the regional importance of environmental issues.

Kosovo

13. (C) Sasae expressed some concern that Kosovo could emerge as an additional political issue in play; U/S Burns suggested Kosovo should no longer be an issue by the time of the July G8 Summit. U/S Burns asked that Japan quickly recognize the newly independent Kosovo as the United States and many Europeans would do; Sasae made no comment. U/S Burns said Russia could be expected to protest Kosovo's independence and could block its membership in the UN, but further UNSC action was not required for an independence declaration; having withdrawn troops and aid programs, Russia had lost its claim to have a voice on the issue and could not stop Kosovo's independence.

Russia

14. (C) Sasae noted the increased difficulty of dealing with Russia; UK counterpart Mark Lyall Grant had frankly described Britain's bilateral problems with Russia and floated G7 discussion of Russia. U/S Burns said the Administration favored G7 discussions only within an economic framework, not political; we had made a decision in 1994 to bring them into the framework, making a dis-invitation difficult. Informal discussions about Russia were acceptable, but should not be not institutionalized; Sasae agreed. U/S Burns described the significant differences between today's Russia and the former Soviet regime and noted the areas in which we cooperated strategically (e.g., non-proliferation and counterterrorism).

Putin's Russia had centralized power, but society was much more open, and we were convinced economic integration with the West was in Russia's self-interest. However, we must be prepared to oppose Russia's behavior in the ex-Soviet space that runs counter to our interests, e.g. in the Caucasus, central Europe and in Central Asia. The centralization of power in the Kremlin, restrictions on the press and efforts to minimize domestic political competition were of concern. The U.S. saw a balance of interests and did not view Russia as a new enemy. Sasae agreed, but noted Russia's protests

regarding U.S.-Japan ballistic missile defense, and said that relations with Russia required "delicate balance."

UN Reform

15. (C) U/S Burns noted that he and others in the State

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Department had had many conversations with Japan on UNSC reform. The President had supported expansion of the UNSC in his September 2007 UNGA speech. There was great interest in talking to Japan, India, Brazil and African countries. The U.S. would respond to proposals. U/S Burns noted that different views existed within the USG. It did not make sense to undertake UNSC reform without coupling it with other reform measures, including managerial, budget, and ethical reforms. A "winning package" of UNSC expansion and reforms was necessary.

16. (C) Sasae thanked U/S Burns for the encouragement and indicated Japan would try again this year to develop a proposal, consulting closely with the U.S. U/S Burns said it was important to continue to consult, and reminded Sasae that Japan was the only nation the U.S. supported publicly for a permanent UNSC seat. He suggested Africa would be the most difficult challenge, not China, which Sasae said now "understands Japan's interest in a greater role"; its neutrality to Japan's UNSC membership would be sufficient.

Iraq

17. (C) U/S Burns briefed on progress in Iraq, which he described as in better shape than a year ago: the surge had positive effects, though political developments remained a concern; it was imperative for social stability that Kurds, Shia and Sunni cooperated; the U.S. would begin negotiations with Iraq on a long-term SOFA-like agreement; the U.S. remained interested in outside political and economic support for the Iraqi government. Sasae agreed that the situation seemed to have improved and that the U.S. deserved greater credit for its "tremendous results." Sasae asked if the localized dialogue with Iran had helped; U/S Burns said the channel, under Ambassador Crocker's direction, was not very active, but the U.S. hoped it would because of Iran's support to the Shia, which it equipped with IEDs.

Iran) diplomacy and domestic politics

18. (C) Sasae asked whether Japan could help with Iran. U/S Burns said that Iran needed to be a major issue for the G8 agenda; he also asked that Japan give political support at the UN for a third UNSCR. U/S Burns noted that once the UNSCR passes, the EU would pass much stronger EU sanctions toward Iran; Japan, the ROK and other major trading partners should consider similar sanctions to make diplomacy effective. Sasae responded that Japan would follow the UNSCR and consider additional measures; while Japan did not order

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its banks to take actions, it made suggestions, which led them to reduce exposure on their own. U/S Burns said that he believed that if not handled correctly, Iranian sanctions could become an issue in U.S.-Japan relations; the U.S. looked to Japan to do much more. Sasae said he would see what he could do, adding that China's actions were important. China as expanding its activities with Iran as others reduced them, and Japan did not want China to take advantage of this situation. U/S Burns cautioned that it would be a

mistake for Japan to measure its actions based on China's; China would do little and would be the "weak link." Sasae said Japan was not linking its action to that of China, but that we collectively needed to work on China. U/S Burns stressed the importance that sanctions succeed to make diplomacy work.

¶9. (C) Sasae suggested that a third UNSCR could help Iran's domestic political situation. U/S Burns agreed, noting that we did not want to do anything to help Ahmadinejad in the run-up to the March 14 Majlis elections. Sasae observed that a serious political struggle was occurring within Iran; society was divided; the fight was not just over power but the "pulse" of the country; and that we needed to consider how best to support moderates. U/S Burns noted criticism of the perceived U.S. unwillingness to talk with Iran was wrong; we were on the record since June 2006 offering talks, and Secretary Rice had repeated this offer at Davos. Iran,

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however, rejected the offer, perhaps because of the lack of political unity within Iran; this became clear after Putin's visit. Sasae suggested that Iran could be waiting for a new U.S. Administration, which U/S Burns said would be a mistake, given strong bipartisan agreement in Washington on the need to address the threat posed by Iran. Sasae suggested continuing bilateral expert discussions on Iran, to which U/S Burns agreed.

Afghanistan and Pakistan

¶10. (C) Sasae stated that Afghanistan and Pakistan needed greater attention, that our activities in the two should be linked, and that Japan planned to propose this for the G8. U/S Burns agreed that Afghanistan and Pakistan were increasingly important, that the Taliban would not be a strategic threat to the Afghan government as long as NATO troops were in-country, and that the military effort was going well, though additional troops and helicopters were necessary. The U.S. was more worried by the civilian effort, which needed a strong person with a strong mandate; the UN was unfocused, and it was regrettable that Afghan President Karzai had reversed himself on Paddy Ashdown serving as UN Special Representative.

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¶11. (C) Sasae noted that although France had proposed a donors conference for Afghanistan, an overall strategy was necessary first. Japan, as G8 Chair, would work to develop a strategy. The Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB), which Japan will host in Tokyo February 5-6, will provide an opportunity to discuss problems. U/S Burns said that Afghanistan needed to be a subject for Leaders and Foreign Ministers in the G8, to which Sasae agreed.

¶12. (C) On Pakistan, U/S Burns described the need for Pakistan to more aggressively pursue Taliban and extremists in the tribal areas of the country. The U.S. had opposed imposition of martial law and the postponement of elections; the assassination of Benizir Bhutto had been a tragedy, since Pakistan needed a stronger political center. Sasae said that Japan would increase its assistance to Pakistan.

India

¶13. (C) U/S Burns described the President's interest in pursuing a strategic relationship with India, of which the civilian nuclear accord was a major component. India needed to conclude negotiations with IAEA chief El Baradei before going to the IAEA Board of Governors and the Nuclear Suppliers' Group. Sasae said Japan knew the U.S. position; Japan had to work through its domestic political process but

ultimately would not oppose the deal. U/S Burns said that the United States and India were increasing military cooperation, both exercises and sales. This was important because the Soviet Union/Russia had been India's main supplier for 60 years. He noted that 75,000 Indians attended U.S. universities; the economic relationship was exploding. Sasae said that Japan also moving toward increased engagement, including investment, with India. Investment in China had a downside; Japan was shifting more investment to countries like India and Vietnam. Japan and India have a security dialogue and an increasing number of exchanges. India realized it needed to improve its relations with other countries in the region, in part to balance relations with China but also on its own merits. Japan wanted to see India more in Asia Pacific. U/S Burns said the United States did not see India as a counter to China.

Burma

¶14. (C) Sasae, calling Burma a "headache," said he was "at wits end." He stressed Japan's desire to help Gambari "do his best." U/S Burns described the interest of the President

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and First Lady on this issue. The United States also supported Gambari but if there were no action and the UN process weakened further, the U.S. would consider more vigorous efforts at the UN. U/S Burns agreed with Sasae's proposal to consider issuing a G8 statement before Gambari visited Burma. U/S Burns noted that the channel between Aung San Suu Kyi and the Minister of Labor that the junta had established was not genuine. Sasae expressed interest in traveling to Burma, though he needed to discuss the idea with his superiors; U/S Burns was supportive.

Trilateral Strategic Dialogue (TSD)

¶15. (C) Sasae invited U/S Burns to Japan for a final TSD Senior Officials Meeting; U/S Burns urged Sasae to hold a meeting after U/S-designate Bill Burns had assumed his responsibilities. Sasae also solicited U.S. views about initiating a Japan-China-U.S. trilateral dialogue, a Chinese idea, and resuming a Japan-U.S.-ROK dialogue on global issues not connected to the Korean peninsula or the Six Party process; he indicated ROK counterpart DFM Shim had responded positively. U/S Burns indicated we would consider the ideas.

IAEA Secretary General

¶16. (C) Sasae told U/S Burns that Japan would put forth the candidacy of Ambassador Amano as Secretary General of the IAEA to replace the Algerian Secretary General El Baradei in ¶2009. U/S Burns said we would consider the matter.

¶17. (U) January 28, 2008; 12:15 PM) 2:00 PM; Washington, D.C.

¶18. (U) Participants:

United States

Under Secretary for Political Affairs R. Nicholas Burns
EAP/J Director James Zumwalt
EAP/J Deputy Director Raymond Richhart
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Japan

Deputy Foreign Minister Kenichiro Sasae, Ministry of Foreign

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Political Minister Masafumi Ishii, Embassy of Japan

Principal Senior Policy Coordinator Takehiro Funakoshi, MOFA

Policy Coordination Deputy Director Kengo Otsuka, MOFA

RICE